



PRESENT

THE BIRDS

BY

A R I S T O P H A N E S

W. H. FRERE'S TRANSLATION

ON

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

NOVEMBER 6 & 7, 1936

AT THE

QUESTORS THEATRE

MATTOCK HALL, MATTOCK LANE

EALING, W.5.

PROGRAMME

PRICE 3d.

THE BIRDS

PRODUCER SPEAKS

We are launching forth on a programme over the next two seasons designed to give a "bird's eye view" of the history of the Drama from earliest times up to the present day. Of this scheme the present production is the first step.

"The Birds" was first produced at one of the great Dionysic Festivals at Athens in the year 414 B.C. These festivals were not unlike a Drama Festival of today (though the competitive element was perhaps more strongly marked), and it is recorded that with this play Aristophanes only succeeded in gaining second prize.

The form of the play perhaps needs a little explanation for those unfamiliar with the Greek Theatre. Greek Comedy evolved from the processions in honour of Dionysus, in the course of which those taking part (the chorus) would exchange jokes (and personal abuse) with the bystanders. This "back-chat" developed until it was prepared as an entertainment, and finally written and rehearsed as a play. This explains the importance of the traditional chorus, which judged by modern standards is often quite extraneous to the play, and many of whose speeches and songs are entirely irrelevant. In Aristophanes' later plays the chorus dwindles into insignificance, and finally disappears from comedy altogether.

In this production the chorus has been retained as such, for to have pruned it would have been to fail in our second purpose, namely to show you a typical example of the theatre of the time. I say "our second purpose" advisedly, for our first purpose is and must be not merely academic, but to provide you with intelligent entertainment, and that has always been at the forefront of our mind in designing this production.

Aristophanes is generally hailed as one of the greatest comic and satiric writers of the theatre, and though it is true that we have no complete comedies by any of his contemporaries with which to compare his work (it would be interesting to read the play which defeated "The Birds"), it can hardly be without significance that his are the only comedies of the time which are preserved to us in entirety.

The producer on a modern stage of a play written for an entirely different kind of stage is inevitably faced with a problem. However, to quote the old tag, "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose": though the form of the stage has altered, man's risibility is still tickled by much the same things today as in B.C. 414, which is the reason why we believe this play will come over to you as fresh today as it did to the Athenians all those years ago.

A.E.J.E.

**COFFEE will be served in the intervals.
If you will give your order beforehand
to a programme seller, it will be brought
to you.**

For 1d. we will lend you a CUSHION.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR QUESTORS

MONDAY, 9th NOVEMBER.—Discussion on "The Birds" in this theatre at 8.15 p.m.

TUESDAY, 1st DECEMBER.—Surprise Night.

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, 18th & 19th DECEMBER.
—Production, "Everyman" and "The Shepherd's Play."

THE BIRDS

BY

ARISTOPHANES

CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE.

EUELPIDES	CLIFFORD FOREMAN
PEISTHETAIRUS	T. S. SAUNDERS
TROCHILUS (a Slave Bird)	RICHARD ELLIS
THE HOOPOE	DUDLEY CLARK
THE HERALD OF THE BIRDS	ROY BURBANK
PROCNE (a Nightingale)	MARJORIE LEES
CHAERIS (a Crow)	MARJORIE BYWATER
THE PRIEST OF THE BIRDS	LIONEL LOCKE
ANOTHER SLAVE BIRD	JOHN BAILY
A POET	CHRISTOPHER SPURRIER
A SOOTHSAYER	LAURIE RIVERS
METON (an Astronomer)	FRANCIS WILLIAMS
A COMMISSIONER	ROY BURBANK
A HAWKER	PAUL EARDLEY-WILMOT
A MESSENGER	PHILIP ALLEN
A WATCHMAN	LISTER BECK
IRIS	AUDREY PERKINS
A YOUNG MAN	DUDLEY CLARK
KINESIAS (a Poet and Musician)	PHILIP ALLEN
A SYCOPHANT	LIONEL LOCKE
PROMETHEUS	CHRISTOPHER SPURRIER
NEPTUNE	LAURIE RIVERS
HERCULES	JOHN HERON
A TRIBALLIAN ENVOY	CLIFFORD FOREMAN
THE QUEEN OF OLYMPUS	MARJORIE LEES
LEADERS OF CHORUS	BETTY MERCY and LILLIE ELLIOTT

CHORUS

JUDY BUNBURY, MARGARET CATESBY, PEGGY COOPER, MURIEL
CURTIS, JUDY LEE, IRIS MARTIN, BARBARA SHARP,
ROSALIE VAN DER GUCHT.

THE PLAY PRODUCED BY ALFRED EMMET

MUSIC SPECIALLY COMPOSED BY ERIC N. H. EVENDEN

FLUTE BARKBY

Costumes designed by AUDREY PERKINS

Setting designed by ALFRED EMMET

Wardrobe Mistress MILDRED EMMET

Assistant Wardrobe Mistress WINIFRED GILES

Lighting Manager ROY BENNETT

Stage Manager FRED ROBINSON

Masks made by { AUDREY PERKINS and
CHRISTOPHER SPURRIER

WIGS BY "BERT"

THE PLAY WILL BE PRESENTED IN THREE PARTS, WITH TWO TEN MINUTE INTERVALS

ANYWAY WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THE SHOW

which is the main thing, and that it will whet your appetite to follow through the development of our New Plan, and see just how your ancestors' taste and ideas in entertainment changed through the centuries.

Your first step will be to come to the discussion, to which you are cordially invited, on Monday next, to air your views and hear the views of others on the play, its choice, production, acting, and so on. The proceedings will be opened by the reading of a short paper on the Greek Theatre, with particular reference to "The Birds."

Then you will want to come to our next production just before Christmas, which is to be the beautiful old morality play, "Everyman," in an English translation from the Austrian version of Von Hoffmansthal, together with a quaint 15th century Nativity, The Wakefield Second Shepherd's Play.

If you are not already a non-acting member of the society it will be well worth your while to become one. A subscription of only 7s. 6d. for the season entitles you to one 3s. 6d. ticket for each of four productions as well as all the other privileges of membership.

Any programme seller will be pleased to give you further details and a form of application for membership.

**THE QUESTORS HAVE A VACANCY FOR AN
HONORARY ASSISTANT LIGHTING MANAGER.
ANYONE INTERESTED SHOULD APPLY TO THE
HON. SECRETARY.**

OTHER SOCIETIES

FEBRUARY 25th, 26th and 27th.—"THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE" (West Middlesex Operatic Society).

MARCH 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th.—"THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH" (Old Ealoniens Amateur Operatic Society).

APRIL 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th.—"BITTER SWEET" (Acton and Ealing Operatic Society).